

Levine, Amy-Jill and Douglas Knight. *The Meaning of the Bible: What the Jewish Scriptures and Christian Old Testament Can Teach Us.* New York: HarperOne, 2011.

Chapter Eight

I can here be brief. In this chapter Levine and Knight take readers all the way from the call of Abram to the literature called apocalyptic. They note that

The story of the ancestors continues the movement between home and exile, sojourn and the search for permanence (p. 237).

This is manifested in the story of the exodus, exile, and return. This restlessness and quest for permanency also marks, doesn't it, modern Israeli policy (as well as Palestinian). This quest is the human quest and that's why it's important that L. and K. point it out.

It's also important that, in connection with the story of the ten plagues, they observe

For an oppressed community, the recounting of the ten plagues can, like the similarly violent book of Revelation, provide comfort. These stories ensure that the oppressors will be punished and that those who endured will be rewarded (p. 246).

In exile, the community needed just such encouragement. But it also needed more, and since the

... postexilic prophets had nothing left to threaten. ... Second Isaiah's successor, the prophet today called Third Isaiah anticipates the shift from prophecy to apocalyptic ... (p. 250).

If threats of punishment aimed at the people of God couldn't get them back in line then the implication, as I read L. and K., is that threats against the enemy could. And that may well be the shift which turned prophet into apocalyptic seer.

The second major division ends thusly and the third begins with the next chapter, titled 'Self and Other'. That's next on the agenda here.

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